

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NAIROB 00759 161457Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05 /074 W

-----022306 161526Z /43

R 161409Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4245

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 0759

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, KE

SUBJECT: DETENTION OF NOVELIST NGUGI WA THIONGO

REF: (A) NAIROBI 0052, (B) NAIROBI 0273, (C) NAIROBI 0658

(D) STATE 010276

1. NAIROBI TIMES JANUARY 15 QUOTES HIGH-RANKING MINISTER TO EFFECT THAT NGUGI WA THIONGO'S ARREST HAD MORE TO DO WITH HIS ACTIVITIES THAN WITH HIS WRITINGS. SAME MINISTER REPORTEDLY OBSERVED THAT GOVERNMENT HAD NOT MOVED TO BAN WA THIONGO'S WORKS.

2. WHAT PRECISELY UNNAMED MINISTER HAD IN MIND, HOWEVER, IS NOT CLEAR. PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC SECURITY ACT UNDER WHICH NGUGI DETAINED DO NOT REQUIRE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF REASONS FOR DETENTION AND NO ALLEGATION OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES ON HIS PART HAVE BEEN LEAKED. NAIROBI TIMES IN LEAD EDITORIAL JANUARY 15 UNDERSCORED EXACTLY THIS POINT IN PLEA FOR GOVERNMENT TO SPELL OUT REASONS FOR THIS AND OTHER DETENTIONS UNDER PUBLIC SECURITY ACT (SEE MEDIA REACTION CABLE OF JANUARY 16).

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3. AT SAME TIME EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS FROM PRESS SOURCES THAT BOTH NATION AND STANDARD RECEIVED CALLS JANUARY 12 FROM OFFICE OF MINISTER OF STATE KOINANGE CRITICIZING HANDLING BY THOSE PAPERS OF WA THIONGO DETENTION WHICH HAD ALLEGEDLY PLACED GOVERNMENT IN BAD LIGHT.

4. THERE HAS BEEN NO STUDENT REACTION AS YET TO
WA THIONGO'S ARREST. UNSIGNED FLYERS CIRCULATED AROUND
CAMPUS OF UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI LAST WEEK CALLING FOR
BOYCOTT OF CLASSES. HOWEVER, BOYCOTT CALL WAS INEFFECTIVE.
SIMILARLY, AN ANTICIPATES STUDENT DEMONSTRATION AT HALLS
OF RESIDENCE FAILED TO MATERIALIZE. ACCORDING CAMPUS
SOURCES, GOVERNMENT HAD BEEFED UP POLICE AND GSU
CONTINGENTS AT AND NEAR UNIVERSITY AND STUDENTS WERE SCARED OFF.

5. COMMENT: AT THIS POINT IT APPEARS MOST UNLIKELY THAT
SIGNIFICANT PRESSURE CAN BE GENERATED ON GOK FROM WITHIN
KENYA TO BRIGN ABOUT RECONSIDERATION OF DECISION TO DETAIN
WA THIONGO.
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Message Attributes

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Concepts: DETENTION
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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780159/aaaabybm.tel
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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